

## CLAIMS:

1. A pectin comprising a galacturonic acid of from 70 to 90 mole % as a constituent sugar, and wherein the molecular weight measured by the gel filtration chromatography is in the range of  $1 \times 10^4$  to  $5 \times 10^7$  and the peak molecular weight is in the range of  $2 \times 10^5$  to  $1 \times 10^7$ .

2. The pectin according to claim 1, wherein the mole ratio of the constituent sugars of a galacturonic acid : arabinose : galactose : glucuronic acid : glucose : xylose : rhamnose : mannose : fructose is 7 to 9 : 0.4 to 0.7 : 0.4 to 0.6 : 0.1 to 0.6 : 0.05 to 0.5 : 0.04 to 0.4 : 0 to 0.1 : 0 to 0.08 : 0 to 0.05.

3. The pectin according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the pectin is separated and recovered from the culture or the culture broth obtained by culturing a *Nigella* plant cell.

4. The pectin according to claim 3, wherein the *Nigella* plant is *Nigella damascena* or *Nigella sativa*.

5. Use of the pectin as described in any one of claims 1 to 4 as a moisturizer.

6. A cosmetic material containing the pectin as described in any one of claims 1 to 4.

7. A process for preparing the pectin as described in any one of claims 1 to 4, which comprises separating and recovering the pectin as described in any one of claims 1 to 4 from the culture or the culture broth obtained by culturing the *Nigella* plant cell.